

# Accessible/Inclusive Meeting & Event Checklist

**Purpose:** The purpose of this checklist is to ensure that WUOT-sponsored meetings are accessible to all individuals including those who have visible or known disabilities, non-obvious disabilities, chronic health conditions, and people of all ages and body types. The checklist and resources below will foster event planning so that all attendees can fully participate and engage in program activities.

## 1. Early Planning Considerations

### The Date & Time

When selecting the date for an event, consider the following to allow for maximum participation:

- Religious holidays/observances - <https://www.diversityresources.com/interfaith-calendar-2023/>
- Major academic dates
  - Grading period/final exams
  - Start of the semester
  - End of fiscal year/payroll deadlines
  - Spring Break
  - Fieldwork
  - Major annual conferences e.g. AOTA, MOTA, ACRM
- Faculty and student schedules – faculty and students have very full schedules and may need considerable advanced notice for the event to be able to block schedules and participate.

### The Venue

Consider multiple options and evaluate them in person before selecting one, if possible.

Look for these features when inspecting the meeting/event space:

**VISIBILITY: CONSIDER THOSE WITH IMPAIRED SIGHT**

Clear signage (identifying location and directions); well-lit meeting space and adjacent areas; projection screen visible from all seating locations (if using projection).

**ACOUSTICS: CONSIDER THOSE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT**

Public address (PA) system available; roving microphone; limit unnecessary background music; seating available near presenter for lip reading; availability of assistive listening devices; closed-captioning on projected power point presentations. Well-lit space for an interpreter, if needed.

**MOBILITY: CONSIDER THOSE WHO HAVE MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS AND THOSE WHO USE A WHEELCHAIR OR OTHER GAIT DEVICES**

Accessible parking near venue; proximity to bus stop; ramp and/or elevator access; accessible bathrooms; barrier-free pathways; wide doorways and aisles to accommodate wheelchairs/scooters; handrails; no loose cables across walking areas.

**TECHNOLOGY: CONSIDER THOSE WHO MAY NEED TO USE ADAPTIVE DEVICES**

Electrical outlets in accessible seating areas to accommodate devices, laptops, etc.; extra space or work surface

- Zoom** – Zoom provides accessibility options, e.g. captioning; please visit the website for assistance in making this option more accessible. <https://zoom.us/accessibility>

**SERVICE ANIMALS: CONSIDER ACCESS AND SPACE FOR SERVICE DOGS**

Comfortable space for service animals to rest during event; accessible toileting and watering facilities nearby.

## 2. Once location, date and time are confirmed

### The Invitation

OPTION 1: Include a message regarding accessibility such as the following:

“We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact <event accessibility champion name and contact information>.

To be respectful of those with allergies and environmental sensitivities, we ask that you please refrain from wearing strong fragrances.

We will accommodate dietary restrictions as much as possible. Please let <event accessibility champion name and contact information> know if you have a food allergy or dietary restriction. To adequately plan with caterers, we will need this information at least two weeks in advance of the event date, by <date>.”

OPTION 2: Another approach is to capture accessibility needs in the meeting RSVP. For example, in a Qualtrix RSVP survey, include a question asking if participants require any accommodations, including dietary restrictions, at the event. If they click “yes”, direct them to a list like the following:

I will need the following accommodations to participate:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistive listening device  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lactation room                      |
| • I have a device and will need connection accommodations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodations for a service animal |
| • I will need a device provided for me   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender neutral bathroom             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Captioning  | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate Lighting                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved front row seat   | <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet room for breaks               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large print   | <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased Noise                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Diet Restrictions. List:            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advance copy of slides to be projected                                  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair access   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair access to working tables throughout room (reserved seating?) | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scent-free room   |  |

## **Messaging to Participants**

One or two days before the event or meeting:

- Send out event-day information to all:
  - Parking options, including where accessible parking is located
  - Other accessible features of event space
  - Reminder about refraining from wearing strong fragrances.
  - Who is contact on site for needs at the event <name, and contact information for event day>

Make sure you follow up on all requests received. If it appears you will be unable to meet a specific request, follow up with the individual who made the request to determine whether an alternative arrangement can be made.

### **3. Before Event**

Ensure that all presenters (internal and external) are aware of WUOT's commitment to disability-inclusive meetings, and ask them to prepare and deliver their presentations with accessibility in mind. Provide presenters with a copy of the Presentation Accessibility Tips and answer any questions or concerns they have.

Post signage and reserve spaces in meeting room, as needed.

Ensure that the accommodations requested are met including American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, mobility needs, dietary accommodations, etc.

1. PowerPoint Guidelines for Presenters: Each slide should have a unique title.
2. All slides should use a minimum font size of 24 points and follow the 1-6-6 rule if possible (no more than six words per line, no more than six bullet points per slide.)
3. Utilize recommended fonts, e.g., Palatino, Georgia, Verdana, Tahoma, Arial and Helvetica.
4. If color is used to emphasize the importance of selected text or convey other meaning, an alternate method (such as bold text) should also be used.
5. Avoid using flickering, flashing, and animated text.
6. All URLs should contain the correct hyperlinks and display the fully qualified URLs (e.g., <https://www.ot.wustl.edu/> not [www.ot.wustl.edu](http://www.ot.wustl.edu)).
7. All active links should resolve to the correct destinations.
8. All slide graphics that convey information should have alternative text associated with them. (Right-click the graphic, click "Format object," click the "Alt Text" pane and enter a brief description of the graphic.)
9. Fill in the Document Properties of Author, Title, Subject, Keywords, and Language under the "Summary" and "Custom" tabs. (On a PC, see File -> Info; On a Mac, see File -> Properties.)

### **4. At Event**

#### SEATING/SET UP

Check on signage leading in to space. Make sure seats are reserved in meeting room, ensure captioning and other technology is working, maintain clear pathways, or other needs.

#### PRESENTATIONS

Have someone onsite to ensure speakers (including those asking questions):

- Always use a microphone
- Activate captions on all videos used in the presentation
- Verbally describe visual materials
- Printed copies available (larger font),
- Avoid using small print on presentations that cannot be seen from a distance,
- Encourage hourly breaks

#### ☐ **ACTIVITIES:**

Organize breakout group activities to maximize distance between groups (e.g. each group going to a corner of the room or side rooms). Think about having options available to complete the activity. For example, if it is an activity that requires writing or drawing on paper can an alternative option be to have the form electronically and complete it on a device (e.g., laptop, tablet, phone, etc.).

#### ☐ **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:**

Make sure to repeat questions posted by audience before responding, especially if there is not a roving microphone available or the meeting is hybrid and some are participating via Zoom or similar. Presenters or audience members may express confidence that they are loud enough and do not need a microphone. Regardless, ask them to use the microphone.

#### ☐ **FOOD:**

Clearly indicate allergens and gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian, or other options. Consider the height of surfaces used for serving food/drinks and make sure guests in mobility devices are still able to reach everything. If participants will eat on site, consider the accessibility of the space where they will eat and ensure trash/recycling bins are in easy-to-locate spots.

#### ☐ **EVENT STAFF:**

Event staff should be well-informed about how to provide accommodations and where to obtain services. Staff should be prepared to answer questions and to offer assistance (accessible parking, seating, using the amenities of the building, assisting with food/drink transportation, etc.)

## **5. If travel and hotel accommodations are needed**

When selecting hotel accommodations for an event, look for many of the same features that are priority when choosing a venue. If possible, evaluate hotels in person.

- In the invitation ask attendees if they will need accommodations for their travel to the event and their hotel room. Share suggested resources and/or arrange travel if appropriate for the guest.
- Ensure the hotel can be easily accessed through a variety of transportation methods (private and public)
- Ask about the hotel's accessible parking, availability of mobility assistive devices for rental, and communicate any accessibility needs to staff as early as possible
- If reserving a block of rooms, include a request for rooms that are ADA accessible (which are often on the ground floor and typically include railings, shower seating, larger bathrooms and entrances, etc.)
- Limit the distance required to travel between the hotel and the event space. Consider also choosing a hotel with its own conference/event space to:
  - Help facilitate informal networking
  - Avoid requiring attendees to secure additional transportation
- Provide attendees with the hotel's contact information for any additional questions about its accessibility and accommodations processes

## 6. If the event is a webinar

Below are three resources to help ensure accessibility if the event will take place as a webinar:

- Overall, select a platform that allows for integrated captioning, is compatible with screen reader software, and provides multiple ways for audience members to engage with the presenter (e.g., interactive whiteboard, chat, participant polling, etc.)
- Provide a telephone-based connection option for any participants with assistive needs to call.

### **Making Your Webinar Accessible**

<http://aea365.org/blog/angie-aguirre-on-making-your-webinar-accessible/>

### **Accessible Webinar Best Practices**

<https://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/AboutThisWebsite/Accessibility/ucm214503.htm>

### **How to Design and Deliver an Accessible Webinar**

[http://accessibilityonline.s3.amazonaws.com/archives/2014-02-19%5EHow to Design and Deliver an Accessible Webinar%5EHandout 2 Slides Per Page.pdf](http://accessibilityonline.s3.amazonaws.com/archives/2014-02-19%5EHow%20to%20Design%20and%20Deliver%20an%20Accessible%20Webinar%5EHandout%20Slides%20Per%20Page.pdf)

**Questions or Comments:** If you have any suggestions for or comments about this Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist, please contact Abby King, [abigailking@wustl.edu](mailto:abigailking@wustl.edu) or Kerri Morgan, [morgank@wustl.edu](mailto:morgank@wustl.edu).

**Acknowledgement:** Materials in this document were modified from: Cornell University Division of Human Resources: [Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist – Accessibility Information \(cornell.edu\)](#)

Association of Research Libraries: <https://www.arl.org/accessibility-guidelines-for-powerpoint-presentations/>

The 1-6-6 Rule: <https://tinyurl.com/4vada6wx>